

AN INTRODUCED MOTH (*HELIOTHIS DIPSACEA* L.)

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While looking over the Clark collection of Lepidoptera recently acquired by the Boston Society of Natural History, my attention was attracted to a single moth bearing the label "*Heliothis dipsacea* L. Europe." A close examination of the moth showed it to be similar to specimens in the author's collection of Essex County, Massachusetts, insects. Fortunately, two specimens from Essex County which had been given to the Boston Society's New England collection were conveniently available for comparison; this proved that all were undoubtedly of the same species. Through the courtesy of Mr. Nathan Banks, European specimens in the collection of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy were examined and the identification confirmed.

With the assistance of Mr. C. W. Johnson of the Boston Society and Mr. A. P. Morse of the Peabody Museum at Salem, European literature was consulted, some disagreement as to larval characters being noted. Most of the food plants recorded are either adventive or naturalized in this country and the introduction of the moth was probably coincident with the introduction of some of the food plants; these include toadflax, teasel, hawkweed, hawk's beard and species of dock and plantain. Some of the food plants are now widely distributed throughout the northeastern United States and it would be interesting to know more about the distribution of the moth in this country with an accurate description of the larva and its habits. In Europe the species is recorded as being widely distributed but not common and it is apparently of little economic importance. Localities are given as central and southern Europe and Asia, northern Africa, Canary Islands and one author (Meyrick) includes "N. America.?"

The moth appears to be rare in the vicinity of Salem, only eight specimens having been taken by the author during six years of collecting; it has been seen but not taken several times,

its unusual appearance making it easily recognized. It (the male moth) flies both by day and night, captures having been made with net in daytime and with trap-light at night.

References:

Phalæna Noctua dipsacea Linné, Systema Naturæ, ed. 12, tome, 1 pars 5, p. 2553.

Heliothis dipsacea Westwood, British Moths, vol. 1, 1843, p. 236, pl. 53, fig. 4.

Heliothis dipsacea Meyrick, Hand Book of British Lepidoptera, 1895, p. 109.

Chloridea dipsacea Seitz, Macrolepidoptera of the World, vol. 1, 1907, p. 245, pl. 50 i.

Heliothis dipsacea Scorer, Entomologist's Log Book, 1913, p. 98.

Description:—Fore wings light brown, darker at inner marginal area; dark brown bar extends across middle of wing blending broadly with dark area at inner margin; narrow dark band at outer submarginal area; dark spot on costal margin near apex; numerous fine black dots are scattered over the wing converging thickly at discal cell forming a small dark area, with a single row at outer margin and an irregular row across the limbal area. Hind wings light buff with a broad black marginal band in the middle of which there are two closely contiguous pale spots divided by vein M2, these two spots in some instances are merged into one bilobed spot; large black discal spot extending nearly to costal margin; marginal fringe whitish. Under side of wings whitish buff with black discal spots, two on fore wing and one on hind wing; irregular narrow black band extends across both wings in limbal area.

Wing expanse, 30 to 35 mm.

Described from six males taken by the author in Essex County, Massachusetts, May 31-June 16, 1916, 1919, 1921.